

Gospel Salvation

EXPLAIN'D,

And Recommended to the

Serious Regard of Christians.

In F O U R Practical Plain

D I S C O U R S E S

On H E B R E W S II. 3.

Preached in the Parish-Church of

H A C K N E Y in *Middlesex.*

By PETER NEWCOME, M. A.

Vicar of H A C K N E Y.

L O N D O N:

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Gospel Salvation

EXPLAINED

And Recommended to the

Serious Regard of Christians

in Four Tractical Papers

DISCOURSES

On Hebrews II.

Preached in the Chapel of



HARVEY

BY PETER NEWTON, M.A.

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

LONDON

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R E A D E R,



H E Publication of the following Practical Plain Discourses was obtain'd from the Author by some Particular Gentlemen of His Parish that Heard them: Whose Request will with Him, always have the Obligation of a Command. To whom he Humbly Dedicates them, in Testimony of his ready Obedience, and in Gratitude for their favourable Opinion of his Mean,

A 2

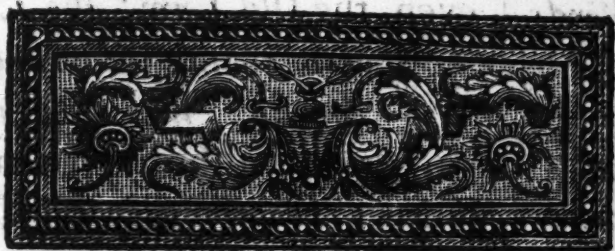
tho'

tho' Sincere Labours among
them. Whose Ambition and
Pleasure it is to be Useful and
Successful in promoting Their
and Other's So Great Salva-
tion ;

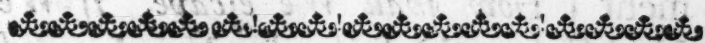
Whilst, in the Work of the Gospel,

Their's,

PETER NEWCOME.



SERMON I.



HEBR. II. 3.

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so
Great Salvation?*



THE Apostle exhorting to *Serm. I.*
give the more Earnest Heed *Verse 1.*
to the things we have
Heard [even the Do-
ctrine of the Gospel he had been re-
commending] lest at any time we
should let them slip --- To enforce This,
from the Greatness of the Blessing,
and Encouragement of the Salvation
contained in it, He admonisheth of
the Inexcusableness and Peril of Neg-

Serm. I. *gleecting it --- Because saith He, if the*
 Verse 2. *Words [even the Old Law; the Law*
of Moses] Spoken [and delivered]
by [Only] Angels, was stedfast,
and [of so great Authority, that]
every [wilful] Transgression and Dis-
obedience received a just Recompence
of Reward [which God would not
 —3*ment] How shall We escape, if We*
Neglect [or Despise the New Law of
the Gospel; The Doctrine of] so Great
Salvation? which at the first began to
to be spoken [and is delivered to us]
by [no less a Person than] the Lord
[the Son of God] and confirmed un-
to us by them [His Apostles] that
Heard Him; [who testified to what
 —4*he did and taught] God also bearing*
them witness &c.

In these Words, then, may be
 Observed Four Propositions, which I
 purpose, Singly, and as Plainly and
 Profitably as I can, to Discourse
 on, viz.

That

Serm. I.

That there is a *Salvation* by Christ offered to Sinners in the Gospel.

I.

That this is a *Great Salvation*.

II.

That nevertheless This *Great Salvation* is too commonly Neglected.

III.

And That such as do Neglect it cannot possibly Escape. For How shall they? None shall, that do Neglect, Escape.

IV.

That there is a *Salvation* by Christ offered to Sinners in the Gospel, Whereby all may Escape, if they will not Neglect it, is Supposed and Implied in their Capacity to Neglect, and in the Need they stand of this *Salvation*.

Obs. I.

For Man, having fallen from his Original Uprightness and Innocence in our First Parents, became thenceforth liable to Condemnation and Punishment. Inasmuch that all, who partake of that Nature, are subjected to this Misery. Being by Nature born in Sin, and the Children of Wrath --- And as we are Born, so we must have

Eph. ii. 3.

Serm. I. Continued, had not some *Deliverance* been provided for our *Escape*; which is called our *Salvation*: Meaning that *State of Safety*, to which we are called by the *Preaching of the Gospel*; Rescuing from the *Evils* incurr'd, and Restoring to the *Happiness* that had been forfeited by the *Fall*. Which in the former respect is strictly a *Deliverance*; In the latter it is properly a *Blessing*; And in Both doth consist the *Christian's Salvation* by *Christ* in the Evangelical Sense.

The *Evils*, from which this *Gospel-Salvation* is a *Deliverance*, are the *Evil of Sin*, and the *Evil of Suffering*.

To be saved from the *Evil of Sin* is to be *Delivered* from the *Power and Dominion of it*; Whereby Men are *Enslaved to their Lusts and Appetites* against *Reason and Conscience*; And to be *Purged from the Guilt and Pollution of it*, whereby Men become *Degenerated*, and *Obnoxious to be Punished* for it. And therefore a Man

Ensla-

Enslaved to his Lusts, and Defiled Serm. I.
 with Guilt, was look'd upon by the

Wiseſt of the very Heathens to be the
 moſt Loſt and Miſerable Wretch ;

Whom they ſtyled *Homo Perditus*.

And the Son of God incarnate aſſu-
 med the Name of Jeſus, a Saviour, Mat. i. 21.

Be cauſe he was to ſave his People from
 their Sins. [Not only from the Guilt,

and Obligation to Punishment, but
 from the Power and Defilement of

Sin.] Who gave himſelf for us, that Tit. ii. 14.

He might Redeem us from all Iniquity,
 and Purify unto himſelf a Peculiar

People zealous of Good Works : We
 being then Saved, when we are made

Saints of Sinners. When, Denying —12.

Ourselves in all Ungodlineſs and World-
 ly Luſts, We live Soberly, Righteouſly,

and Godly in this preſent World—

which is ſaid Expreſſly to be that Sal- —11.

vation which the Grace of God bringeth,
 and hath appeared unto all men. To

which Zachens, by Repenting, Con-
 forming himſelf, is ſaid to have Sal- Luke xix.

vation that day come to his Houſe— 9.

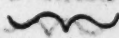
which

Serm. I. which is, therefore, called a Repen-
 2 Cor. vii. tance unto Salvation -- being a Delive-
 10. rance from the Evil of Sin.

A Deliverance from the Evil of Suf-
 fering is but the Consequence of be-
 ing Delivered from the Evil of Sin.
 To which Punishment is due both at
 Present and Hereafter. For, as by Na-
 ture all men are Sinners, so they are
 said to be the Children of Wrath:
 Whose Salvation the Apostle there-
 fore expresseth by a being Delivered
 1 Thes. i. from the Wrath to come --- [which is
 10. the Consequent of Sinning.]

This is the Notion wherein all Men
 agree and presume to be Saved.
 Who, contentedly abiding under the
 Power, with the Pollution of Sin, are
 only solicitous to Escape it's Wages:
 Which is the Loss of Happiness, The
 Pain of Misery, And the Everlasting-
 ness of Both in Outer Darkness, where
 shall be Weeping and Wailing and Gnash-
 ing of Teeth. But what compleateth
 the Gospel-Salvation is the Happiness
 to which Men are restored by Christ:
 Being

Mat. xiii.
 42.

being Translated out of a State of *Serm. I.*
Corruption and Guilt into the Glori- 

ous Liberty of the Sons of God --- *Rom. viii.*
21.

Which is the State of Grace. Here,
that is the Beginning of Glory Ever-
lasting. Whereby the Body will be

for ever Rescued and Saved from all
the Infirmities and Dishonours of

Mortality, And the Spirits of just men *Heb. xii.*
be made perfect in a Divine both *Assi-* *23.*

milation and Enjoyment. So that, as
we have born the Image of the Earthly, *1 Cor. xv.*
49.

we shall also bear the Image of the Hea-
venly: And, as the Image of the Hea-

venly was the Happiness of Man in
Paradise, and the Loss of it was the

Punishment of his Apostacy; So the
Renewing of his Nature, and the

Restoring Him to a more Lively and
Perfect Resemblance of God will be

the Consummation of his Salvation
in Heaven. Which, being Final, is

therefore *Emphatically* a *Salvation*; *2 Tim. ii.*
called *The Salvation which is in Christ* *10.*

Jesus with Eternal Glory --- Whereof
He is said to be the *Author unto all* *Heb. v. 9.*

them

Serm. I *them that Obey him* --- Even of that *Eternal Life of Happiness* obtained for *Repenting Sinners* by the Merit of *Christ's Suffering* for them.

Applic. Such, then, is the *Salvation* of *Sinners* by *Christ* taught in the *Gospel*. Which I have insisted on, thus Particular; to *Rectifie our Practice* by the *right Notion of it*---To *Admonish* what *Graces and Ordinances* of the *Gospel* are to be accounted *Saving*---To *Direct* our *Examination and Tryal* of our own *Spiritual State and Condition*---And to *Teach us the Exercise of Mutual Charity and true Christian Beneficence*; for the *Conviction* of such who *Chiefly* concern themselves to *Profelyte All* they can to *only a Faction*; Or to *seduce Others* to be *Wicked* with themselves to *Damnation*. Which is the *Use* to which I will endeavour to *Apply* what hath been said, before I proceed to discourse on what further was *Observ'd*.

1. Let therefore, what hath been said, *Rectifie Men's Practice* by the *right*

right Notion of a Gospel-Salvation. Of Sermon. I.

which most Men talk, and too many
 live in Hopes, as if it were Only a
 Salvation from Punishment; which
 therefore they are only solicitous to
 escape, without any Concern for the
 sinfulness of their State, or Guilt of
 their Persons. Who desire and Pur-
 pose to be Saved, Only so as not to be
 Damned at last, without being De-
 livered from their Corruptions of Nature
 at present. Like Hardned Malefa-
 ctors, who desire to be Saved from
 only the Gallows, that they may hold
 on the course of their Villanies so
 much the longer, and with greater
 freedom; so all Men would be Saved,
 but most would Sin too. Whereas
 you have seen that to be Saved, is
 only to quit your Sins and to be De-
 livered from the servitude of them to
 glorify God Here and to Enjoy Him
 for Ever. Other Salvation than which
 was never meant us; Neither is Suffi-
 cient to answer our Need; nor con-
 sistent with what we are called upon

to

Serm. I. to Regard. For it is not only Paradise, but Innocence, that Mankind lost by the Fall. And therefore it is Purity, as well as Ease, our Nature wanteth; And we must be Delivered from Guilt, as well as Punishment, to Escape the Misery, and to Enjoy the Felicity it is capable of. Infomuch that Even Heaven itself would be no Salvation to a Fallen-Unreformed-Sinner: who, as he can never Possibly in such an Uncovenanted State, come thither; so would he not be at Ease but for Ever Restless, in such an Unqualify'd Condition, were he there. And therefore the Salvation of such Creatures, as We are, must necessarily consist (as hath been shewn) in our Deliverance, from the State of Sin Here, which both Capacitate for, and Entitles to, the Blessing of Escaping Damnation Hereafter. For to Escape out of the State of Sin (in the which we were Born; are Naturally Inclined to; and Most are still Holden in) is the very Salvation wrought

wrought out for us by the *Incarnation, Sermon I. Passion, and Glorification* of the Son of God in our Nature: Who came to *save his People From* [and not *In*] *their Sins*: Not to *Deliver* them from only the *wrath* to come, with their *Corruptions* and *Unmortify'd Lusts* about them; but to *Rectify* their Nature and Reform their Lives first, in order to save their Souls afterwards. And this he hath done by Calling us to *Holiness of Life*, And by working that *Blessed Change in our Heart* thro' the Sanctifying and Sufficient Assistances of the Holy Spirit, which with our own Willing Endeavours never fail to *Turn from Sin to Obedience*, and to Re-instate in the *Favour of God* with a full *Pardon* of all Transgressions, to the free *Justification* of our Persons. *A Converted Penitent State being the Christian's Salvation at Present, without which he is to expect no Other ever Hereafter.*

For it is, indeed, but the very same *Salvation*, in differing Degrees, to

Serm. I. to be saved from Sin, and to be saved from Hell. For he that is not first saved from Sin, cannot Escape Hell: Neither need He fear to be Damn'd to Hell, whose Sins are Pardon'd (upon his Faith and Repentance, which are the Stated Condition, and necessary Qualification for Pardon) Here on Earth. This is, undeniably, the Doctrine of the Gospel; which at

Ver. 3. the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that

— 4. Heard him: God also bearing them Witness, both with Signs and Wonders, and with divers Miracles and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own Will --- Which, therefore is called The Gospel of our Salvation --- The Word of This Salvation --- To which all the Precepts, Promises and Threats of it are Effectually fitted --- And whence it is said to be The Power of

Eph. i. 13. Acts xiii. 26. Rom. i. 16. God unto Salvation to Every one that Believeth.

2. Let this again, Admonish us what Graces and Ordinances of the Gospel are

are to be accounted *Saving*. For, see- Serm. I.
ing *Salvation* is, Primarily, a *Deliverance* from our *Sins*; Then only those
Graces and *Ordinances* are *Saving* that
tend to our *Sanctification*. For what-
ever Nice Distinctions and Dry Dis-
putes the Schools have rais'd and Peo-
ple have fancied Herein, it will not
Ever be Hence difficult for any Ho-
nest Heart to receive Satisfaction,
who feels Himself influenc'd with
Spiritual Strength against his Carna-
lity. For what need any trouble
themselves to bring their *Graces* to
any other Test than their own Hearts
and Lives? which is a truer Touch-
stone, and Easier to be come by,
than all the subtle Conceits and per-
plex'd Difficulties of the Learned.
And not the most Illiterate but may
safely conclude his *Graces* and God's
Ordinances are *Saving*, whereby He
is prevail'd with to Cease to do Evil,
and Learn to do well. For our *Salva-*
tion being our *Deliverance* from the
Habit of Sin, to an Habit of Holiness,
B any

Serm. I.  any thing is *Saving* that also *Sanctifieth*. And So That is a *saving Faith* that maketh *Obedient* : That a *saving Repentance* that worketh an *Amendment* : That *saving Grace* which enableth to *Deny all Ungodliness*, and to lead a *Godly, Righteous and Sober Life* : And those *saving Ordinances* that are *Powerful and Proper Instruments* to *Enlighten the Mind*, to *awaken Conscience*, to *Purify the Affections*, to *Govern the Will*, and to *Reform an Immoral Life*. The *End and Excellency* of all *Religion* being to *suppress Vice*, and to *Promote Vertue*. Nothing being *Saving to us*, that doth not some way conduce toward the *saving of us from our Sins*.

III. Let us, then Further, Hereby *Examine and Try our own State*. About which the *Signs of Salvation*, having been so very *Injudiciously multiply'd*, have frequently raised *Doubts and Perplexities*, to the great *Discouragement* of so necessary a *Duty*. For
some

some have neither *Capacity*, nor *Leisure*, nor *Courage* to apply themselves Particularly to a Multitude of Rules. Who, therefore, to avoid the *Pains*, neglect the *Practice*, of this Duty. And others have been so Bewilder'd and Perplex'd in the Maze, as either to have been lost in *Despair*, or to have Extricated themselves with *Lost Labour*, and a *Disturbed Mind*. Whereas *This One Plain Rule* is sufficient and Fitted for all Capacities. For no Man but, if He will Reflect upon his own Heart and Life, can tell Himself, whether or no He yet loves his Sins too well to part with them: Who cannot live Wilfully in any *Known Sin*, and be at the same time in a *State of Grace and Salvation*, which is a *Deliverance from all Sin*.

Sins of *Invincible Ignorance* and *Infirmities* God can, and will, thro' Christ's Satisfaction and Merit, Conive at, and Save any one with them: Because they are what cannot be Help'd; And, consequently, are no

Serm. I. *Sins in us*, tho' being a Transgression of God's Law, they are *Sins in themselves*. But our *Wilful* and *Presumptuous Sins*, that we *Might have Prevented*, and *Would not*, either *Not yet*, or *Not at all* part with, [They] are altogether Inconsistent with any Share in either God's *Saving Grace*, or in the *Christian's offered Salvation*. So that it is utterly Impossible for a *Profane Swearer*, an *Unclean Person*, a *Common Drunkard*, a *Worldly Miser*, a *Disbonest Dealer*, an *Unjust Oppressor*, a *Passionate*, *Revengeful Person*, a *Licentious Sabbath-Breaker*, an *Hard'ned Impenitent*, or Any Other that hath *Little or No Fear of God before his Eyes*; who *Neglects* and *Derides Religious Duties*; And is neither *Accustom'd* to, nor *Delighted with*, the Service of God--- I say it is Impossible for such to think of being *Saved in the Common Way of Salvation* (Besides which there is *no Other Way* to be depended on) while they continue such. Neither can such pretend to any further *Grace of God* than

than that of his *Forbearance*; (which Serm. I.
is far short of being *Saving*) where-
by God is pleased to *Wait* yet (Even
to a *Miracle of Mercy*) to be *Gracious*
to *Graceless Sinners*! Whom He doth
not, Ordinarily, Snatch away in their
Secure and Deplorable State, without
allowing further *Space* and *Means* for
Reconciliation. Wherewith, would
they *Comply*, Renounce their *Evil*
Courses, and Live as *New Men*; Even
They also might *work out* their own *Sal-*
vation, and *Hope for Safety*, according
to the *Terms of Safety*, Published in
the *Gospel*, by *Christ*.

Let us then, Once more, be Hence IV.
Instructed in the Exercise of Mutual
Charity, and true Christian Beneficence.
For, seeing *Salvation* is Man's Ultimate
Felicity, to Promote it is the greatest
Charity: Which also, consisting in
a *Deliverance from Sin*, by the *Sancti-*
fication of our Nature, can be no
Otherwise express'd than by *Opposing*
Sin, and *Encouraging Holiness*, what

Serm. I. in us lies, among Ourselves. This is the truest *Charity* and *Kindness* We can Design for any one ; Or that any one can be capable of from us. By which we may Oblige and do one another Good, when we may have neither Ability nor Opportunity of Otherwise Shewing Kindness. And therefore, among the Many Various Endeavours that are Commendably Used for our Brethren's Good (whether in their *Body*, *Name* or *Estate*) we ought still, be sure, to have an Eye to their *Chiefest Good*, to *Deliver them from their Sins*, and to *Induce them to be Vertuous* ; By our *Councils*, our *Reproofs*, our *Good Examples*, and continued *Prayers* for them ; Whereby we shall not only keep Ourselves clear from their *Guilt* and *Ruin*, but may contribute to *save them by our Love*, Even as *Christ came to save us all by his Love*, (to the same Purpose, with a like Intent) *saving from Sin, unto Sanctification and Glory* ; which is *Salvation*. Without which,

all *Good Turns* will proceed from but *Serm. I.*
 either *Mistaken* or *Dissembled Good*
Will, that will End in *Wrong* and
Disappointment.

The two following Sorts of *Un-
 charitable Persons* become Especially
 Hereby *Reprovable*.

Such as concern themselves so much in I.
Profelyting, all they can, to only a Fa-
ction; Having regard not so much to
Other's Sins, as to *Other's Opinion*.
 For too too many such there are, who
 Setting up for *Reformers*, labour to
 promote *Not Vertue*, but *an Interest*.
 And, so they can gain *Profelytes to*
their Party, trouble not themselves to
 make any *Converts from Sin*. For let
 a Man be never so *Blameless* and *Re-*
gular in his *Life*, be he but *Suspected*
 to be *Heterodox* in his *Opinion* (And
Suspected he shall be, if he *Contra-*
dict, or *Run not to the same Length*
 with *Others*) How much more *Obno-*
xious to *Ill-Will*, *Reproach* and *Re-*
venge doth he usually become among
 his *Neighbours*, than the most *Im-*

Serm. I. moral or Stupid that do but profess themselves to be on the *Right*, that is, on *their Side*? Infomuch, that the *being of such a Party* shall *Excuse all Faults*, and make an *Honest Man*. To Oppose which, or Dissent therefrom, will make an *Honest Man a Knave*: This, it seems, being a Fault for which no *Vertue* shall be able to Attone.

Whereas, from what hath been Said, it is Plain, that *Repentance* and *Sanctification* are of Absolute Necessity for Men of whatever *Party*. Without which it little matters, and will less avail, of what *Party* they are; For whom there can be no *Salvation* in any *Party*. And which therefore, in Reclaiming and Profelyting Others from their Errors, ought to be Principally Regarded and Intended; Whereby to bring Men to God and Save their Souls, rather than Only to secure them to our own Interest and Faction. For to Convert a Man to the Faction of a Party, and not to the

Obedi-

Obedience of God's Laws, is to win *Serm. I.*
a Profelyte but Half, (tho' in never so
Right a) Way; whose Soul cannot
be Saved from Death further than he
shall be Recovered, as from Error, so
from Sin too. And were This, as it
ought to be, made the Chief End of
Profelyting; as our *Factions*, which Di-
vide and Disturb, would grow Less;
so our *Charity*, that would Quiet and
Unite us, would Abound, to the
Glory of God, and the Publick Wel-
fare in our Common *Salvation*.

But such, more Especially, are
herein Reprovably concern'd, *Who ex-*
press their Kindness to Others by endea-
vouring to seduce them into Sin. In
which respect, some will shew them-
selves to be never More Friendly, than
when they are about to prove them-
selves to be Most Injurious. For too
many such there are in the World,
whose Kindest and Merriest Enter-
tainments are the Promotion of Pro-
phaneness; And their Best Welcome is
to ensnare Others into the worst Ex-
cesses.

Serm. I. *cesses.* Who Glory to make a Sober Man Drunk: To inveigle a Chaste Man into Places of Leudness: To Ridicule Seriousness out of Countenance: To hate and Disparage Every One Less Wicked than themselves: *wherein they think Strange of all that will not run with them to the same Excess of Riot; Speaking Evil of them* (As St. Peter describes them.) Who, instead of promoting *Salvation*, take Pride and Pleasure to seduce All they can into *Damnation*! Which, surely, is not only *Uncharitable*, but *Barbarous*! Whereby Men shew themselves to be *More Cruel than Murthe- rers of the Body*; And to be *Less Compassionate than the Damn'd in Hell*! Forasmuch as the *Former cannot Kill the Soul*; And the *Latter* (in the Person of the Rich Man in Hell) are represented Desirous, by a Message for Repentance, to prevent Other's *coming into that Place of Torment*. So that there are not greater Enemies to Mankind, Nor a Worse Pest to a

Com-

I Pet. iv.
4.

Luke xvi.
28.

Community than the Irreclaimably Wicked : Who, by their Communicating Guilt, Scatter Damnation! which is the Sorest Injury, and the most spiteful Unkindness that can be done. For which, as they will Deserve no Thanks, so they shall Escape no Punishment. Serm. I.

In all our Conversation, then, in order to express that *Charity* we all are indebted in to One another, How careful ought we to be of ever giving any Countenance to Sin, and of taking all Opportunities we can to Dissuade Others from it? Remembering that *Sin* is no more to be sported with, than *Damnation* is. Which, who, in earnest, would Wish; or not do all he can to Prevent, to his Worst Enemies? Ah; How little of the *Christian Temper*, and *Charity of the Gospel*, hath He; that can with Unconcernedness, yea with Pleasure, not only suffer *Sin* to rest upon his Brother; but add to his Burden; and, instead of Unloading, help to Load Him

Serm. I. Him the Heavier with it ! Christ Died to *save Sinners* ; But such Live to make Men *seven times more* So ! So that, in the very same Sense, He was a *Saviour* to *save his People from their Sins*, They are--- I care not to say --- (I wish they would think) What --- to seduce Others from their Duty into Damnation !

Surely therefore, it Highly concerns us all, in our Places, to endeavour as much a *Reformation*, as we ought to desire the *Salvation* of all we converse or have to do with.

For this End, Let us more vigorously Oppose Vice, and more Heartily Encourage Vertue : Whereby alone we have the greatest Opportunities of Doing Good ; and of Living the most Useful Lives in the World. Whereby no Man can Live to better Purpose, nor with greater Advantage ; By vindicating the Interest of *Innocence*, Promoting *Humane Salvation* : which nothing but Sin

Sin *Endangers*, And from which it is *Serm. I.*
the Only *Deliverance*. 

What then can we have to mind more than This; that we should not Employ and Busy Our-selves more about it? Striving against *Our own Sins* to forsake and Reform them! Opposing *Other's Sins*, by our Kind Persuasions and Good Examples! Particularly,

Let *Parents* strictly Enjoin Religion on their *Children*: *Masters* Sedulously Recommend it to their *Servants*: *Superiors* Countenance it in their *Inferiors*: *Magistrates* draw their Sword, and *Ministers* proclaim God's Word to support it: Every one Espousing and Conforming to it, as Heartily and Sincerely, as he Desires His own and Other's *Salvation* which consisteth in it.

This is to be Kind indeed! Is the only true Christian Catholick Temper! The Divine *Love* that, as it *Descends from Heaven*, So will Lead thither!

Serm. I. *thither!* The which, if we duly Pursue, will not only Bring us thither, but will Enlarge our Inheritance of *Salvation* There.

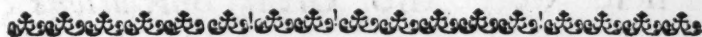
Which God Grant! &c.



SER.



S E R M O N II.



H E B R. II. 3.

*How shall we escape, if we neglect so
Great Salvation?*



THE next Proposition distinguished in these Words Serm. II.
was, ~

That the Gospel-Salvation Obs. II.
on is a very Great Salvation. The
Greatness of which the Apostle hath
here express'd *Emphatically*, with
a Mark of *Admiration* [so] *Great
Salvation--So Great*, as wondering at
it's Greatness. *Eximiam ut Mirè magnam
Salutem--*The most Excellent and
Wonderful Deliverance; that ex-
ceedeth all that ever were before it!
Such as was never any Besides it!
Not

Serm. II. Not like that of Moses, Joshua, or Gideon, Delivering out of Bodily Slavery! Saving from the Invasions and Oppressions of Tyrannous Enemies, and bestowing Temporary Possessions, and Worldly Grandeur! (Altho' These were also Great Salvations; And as such Commemorated in the Old Testament, and even yet Expected by the Jews from their Messiah to come) But infinitely Greater and more Desirable is the Gospel-Salvation, As will appear, which Way soever we cast our Eye upon it, Whatever we consider In or About it: Whether the Evils it saveth from: The Blessings it procureth: From whom it is derived: For whom it is intended: The Price it cost: The Manner of its Contrivance: And the Powerfulness of it's Effect.

- I. For This is a Great Salvation with respect to the Evils it saveth from; which is Sin, with all it's Dire Consequences of Disgrace, Judgments and Torments in both This and the next State. A Greater Salvation than which,

which, Fallen Creatures are neither *Serm. II.*
 Capable of, nor Need ! For 'tis only 
Sin that is both *Evil in it self*, and the
Cause of Evil to us ; Inasmuch as it
 is *Contrary to the Nature of God*, and a
Depravity of the Nature of Man ;
 Which Offendeth Him, and Disturbs
 and Hazard's Ourselves. By being
Saved from which, we shall be De-
 livered from Every thing *Hurtful* in
 either this World or the Other ---
 Even from the *Wrath of God*, the
Torments of Conscience, and the *Mise-*
ries of Hell --- Whereupon the Inspi-
 red Psalmist pronounceth Him *Blessed*,
whose Transgression is forgiven, whose *Ps. xxxii. 1.*
Sin is covered. Unpardon'd Guilt
 being utterly Inconsistent with *Bles-*
sedness ; Under which men are most
Miserable ; and can be *Happy* by only
 their Deliverance from it, which is
 therefore, a *Great Salvation* to them.

Of This it is Hard, indeed, to
 convince the Generality of men at
 present : Who are in Love with Sin :
 are devoted to the Service of their own

C

Lusts :

Serm. H. Lusts : And desire no Other *Salvation* than what may Excuse them from the *Punishments* that threaten their *Transgressions* : Which none care to suffer for, However Obstinate they are to *Persist in*. And yet there being no *Evil* suffer'd but what is for *Sin*, This Still argueth *Sin* to be the *Greatest*, because the *Original*, of all *Evil*. Of which the *Punishment*, when felt, doth usually convince : And which is no other way to be *Escaped*, but by a *Deliverance from Sin*. For there is nothing *Hurtful* in any thing, but *Sin*. Without which the most *Hurtful* things become not only *Harmless* but *Profitable* to us : Who *Know*, because we are *Infallibly* assured, that all things work together for *Good* to them that *Love God* ; to them who are the *Called according to his Promise*. So that we need *Deliverance* from no *Other Evil* ; being, in *This*, at Once *Delivered* from the *Mischief* of *All Evils*. And if, then, there be any *Evils Great* either in this *World* or the

Rom. viii.
28.

the Other ; to be Saved from Sin, *Serm. II.*
 which is the Only Cause of them,
 must need's be own'd a Great Sal-
 vation.

'Tis, further, a Great Salvation with *II.*
 respect to the Blessings to be Obtained by
 it. For a Deliverance from Guilt, is
 a Restauration to Innocence. Which
 imply's the Sanctification of our Na-
 ture: The Mortification of our Lusts:
 The Peace and Quiet of our own
 Minds: A Love and Friendship with
 God: An Interest and Acceptance in
 Christ: A Communication and Fel-
 lowship in the powerful Assistance of
 the Blessed Spirit: The Guard of Good
 Angels: The Care of a Special Pro-
 vidence: The Enjoyment of all that
 is Good and Fit for us at present: And
 the Assurance of all that hath been
 Promised for our reward Hereafter; *1 Cor. ii. 9.*
 What neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear
 heard; nor ever yet entred into the
 Heart of Man to conceive: An Inheri- *1 Pet. i. 4.*
 tance incorruptible --- An Everlasting *2 Thes. ii.*
 Consolation --- A Crown of Glory, that *16.*
1 Pet. v. 4.

Serm. II. *fadeth not away --- An Exceeding and*
 2 Cor. iv. *Eternal Weight of Glory --- Infinitely*
 17. *Exceeding both the Weight of our*
Pains for it, and the Reach of our
present Imaginations of it! Which
Nothing but Sin Hinders! Only our
own Guilt can Deprive us of! --- To
be Saved from which, is the Christi-
an's so wonderfully Great Salvation,
in the Good it brings.

III. *It appears also Great, with respect to*
its Author from whom it is derived.
The Dignity of the Donor impart's
a Value to every Gift. Inasmuch
that from a Person of Worth, a Worth-
less Gift is usually esteemed a Great
Favour. And how Great, then,
ought this Great Salvation to be esteem-
ed by Us; Coming, not from any
Fellow-Creature, or Angel, tho' of the
Highest Rank and Order; But im-
mediately from Christ; whose excel-
lent Glory and Majesty our Apostle
had displayed in the foregoing Chap-
 verse 2, *ter, Where he styles Him The Son of*
God:

God : The Heir of all things --- And *Serm. II.*
Maker of the Worlds : --- Whom 
He calls The Brightness of his Father's
Glory --- The express Image of his
Person --- And the Upholder of all
things. --- And in the following part ---^{14.}
of the Chapter declares how far Christ
transcends all the Holy Angels ; whom
he calls His Servants and Ministering
Spirits --- Commanded to Fall down
and Worship Him, The Eternal, and
Only Begotten Son of God --- Who hath
a Throne, A Sceptre of Righteousness ---^{8.}
yea, the Scepter of his own Kingdom.
And even of this Great --- This Glo-
rious Divine Person --- is our Salvati-
on the immediate Dispensation ! Pur-
chas'd at the Dearest Price ! And most
freely Bestow'd upon the Most Un-
deserving Persons ! For, therefore,
again,

It is Great with respect to Us, for IV.
whom it is intended : It being not
only Appropriated to Man, but Ex-
tended to All Mankind.

Serm. II.

A Great Salvation it is, being Offered to Man; rather than to Angels, that were Creatures of a Superior Order: Of a more Spiritual Nature: Perhaps not more Offensive: Who no less Needed: As much Deserved: And might have made a better Return for the Mercy of it! And yet They, in their Lapsed State, are passed by, without any Overtures of Salvation made to Them; And Poor Sinful, Deluded, Helpless Man; without Desert; without Desire; Beyond Expectation; was instantly Remembered, and Effectually Relieved! A Great thing for such a Creature, in such Circumstances, by such a Person, to be Saved! Angels rejected, and Man regarded! Not only One or Two of the most Rare and Eminent; But the Whole Race of Mankind! And therefore,

A Great Salvation, being Universal Extending to All. To which All have an Equal Claim upon the same Terms. And therefore the Apostle,
after

after the Text, teacheth That Christ *Serm. II.*
 tasted Death for Every Man. So that *verse 9.*
 However Salvation, of Old, was
 only of the Jews; yet, Now, Christ *Joh. iv. 22.*
 is a Light to lighten the Gentiles, as *Luke ii. 32.*
 well as the Glory of his People Israel.
 Therefore God is said to be no Re- *Acts x. 34,*
 specter of Persons; But in Every Nation, *35.*
 He that Feareth God, and worketh Right-
 teousness is accepted of him. And *Luke ii. 10.*
 the Angels's Glad-Tidings of Great Joy,
 deliver'd to the Shepherds was to be
 extended unto All People. Accord-
 ingly St. Paul taught That Christ gave *1 Tim. ii.*
 himself a Ransom for All: And St. *6.*
 John declared That he is the Propi- *1 John ii.*
 tiation for our Sins; And not for Our's *2.*
 only, but also for the Sins of the Whole
 World--Even for those Evil Men of
 the World that Denied Him; whom *2 Pet. ii. 1.*
 St. Peter assureth us were also Bought
 by Him. So that they Seem greatly
 to Lessen this Salvation, in this re-
 spect, who would have it Restrain'd
 to a certain Number; which is Ge-
 nerously offered to All; And from

Serm. II. 2 which none are Excluded, but who
 by wilful Obstinacy, or final Impe-
 nitence, Exclude themselves. So Stu-
 pendiously Great is this Salvation,
 with respect to the Persons to whom
 it is offered.

V. It is moreover a Great Salvation
 with respect to the Price it cost. For
 we were Redeemed not with Nothing,
 Nor for a Trifle that cost the Donor
 1 Pet. i. 18. Nothing, Neither (as St. Peter tells
 us) with such Corruptible Things as
 Silver and Gold -- Seeing that what
 all the World was worth fell infinite-
 ly short of the Terms it was held at,
 So that we must have let That alone for
 ever -- Yea tho' there had been of-
 fered a Thousand Rams, and Ten Thou-
 sand Rivers of Oyl -- Or the Fruit
 of our Bodies had been given for the
 Sin of our Souls -- yet nothing Less
 or Other than the Incarnation and
 Death of the Son of God could come
 up to its Value! Who left his Throne:
 Obscur'd his Majesty: Liv'd an
 Humble

Humble, Contemptible Life: And *Serm. II.*
 Dyed a Shameful, and Painful Death
 for us Men, and for our Salvation!
 And Seeing that the Worth and Ex-
 cellency of a thing is Usually Mea-
 sured by the Greatness of it's Price;
 How Great is this Salvation, that
 could not be had on Easier or Other
 Terms! Especially, considering Here-
 with, that

It is a Great Salvation with respect to VI.
the Manner of it's Contrivance; Which
was in no Ease, no Ordinary, but in
the most Astonishing Method, By the
most Difficult Means, to be brought
about. Seeing, in order Hereto, Sin
was to be fully satisfied for, to the Of-
fended Justice of God: Which was be-
yond the Power of any Creature to
effect. And, it being Man whose
the Sin was, therefore were Two of
the most astonishing Wonders contri-
ved and effected for this Salvation,
far Outdoing God's Almighty Work
of Creation: Even God's becoming Man
 by

Serm. II. by the Union of two of the most
 Distant Natures, And His Humbling
 Phil. ii. 8. Himself therein to become Obedient
 unto Death, even the Death of the
 Cross --- In a Word,

This may, also, be called a Great
 Salvation with respect to the Power-
 fulness of it's Effect. For to be Sa-
 ved from Sin, and to be Preserved in
 Obedience unto Eternal Life, in this
 Present State of Corruption and Try-
 al, is a work of Great Power; Equall'd
 by St. Paul to even the Resurrection of
 Christ from the Dead: who calleth it,
 Eph. i. 19, The exceeding Greatness of the Power of
 God towards them that Believe, accord-
 ing to the Working of his Mighty Power;
 — 20. which he wrought in Christ, when he
 Raised him from the Dead. Intimating,
 that the like Power, that was exerted
 to Raise Christ from the Dead, ap-
 peareth to be employed in the Salva-
 tion of a Sinner, to Raise him from the
 Death of Sin, to a Life of Righteouf-
 ness. This nothing but an Almighty
 Power

Power can effect; either of *Sinners* to *Serm. II.*
 make *Saints*; Or to Preserve them so
 to the end. Which is to Turn Men
 from *Darkness* to *Light*, and from the *Afts xxvi.*
Power of Satan to *God*: To be Spi- *11.*
 ritually *Quickened*, who before were
 Dead in *Trespases* and *Sins*: To be *Eph. ii. 1.*
 Born again: To become *New-Creatures*:
 And (notwithstanding *Humane In-*
firmity and *Instability*: A *World* of
Vanity and *Temptations*: And the
Devil's subtle and incessant Oppo-
 sitions, who walketh about as a roaring *1 Pet. v. 8.*
Lion, seeking whom he may devour) *illqA*
 to be Kept by the *Power of God*, thro' *—1, 5.*
Faith, unto *Salvation*. So Powerfully
 are we *Saved*! with such a *Mighty*
Hand doth *Salvation* by *Christ* Rescue
 from *Sin*, and Preserve in a State of
Grace, Even to a State of *Glory*!
The Kingdom of Heaven (as our Lord
 said) *Suffering Violence*, and the *Violent* *Mat. xi. 12.*
take it by force.

And now laying all these Con-
 siderations together: (Reflecting on
 the *Great Evils* we are saved from:

The

Serm. II. The Great Happiness we are advanced to : The Great Author of our Salvation : The Great Benefit accruing to us by it : The Great Price it cost : The Great Wonder by which it was wrought : And the Great Power it is actually accompanied with to Save us : We cannot but, in Admiration, with our Apostle, acknowledge it to be a So Great Salvation ! Every way Compleat, Beautiful, and Astonishing, beyond Parallel ! beyond Expression ! beyond Conception !

Applic. And if so, Then let us Apply it to the following good Uses :

1. To keep us always Humble under a powerful Sense of the Obligations hereby laid upon us. Who are, Certainly, by so Great a Salvation, the most Obligated Persons ! Always bound to make Returns ; and yet Necessitated to be always in Arrears !

For So Great a Salvation calls for our Great Thanks : Our Great Endeavours : And our Great Care, in some Kind and Degree, to become Wor-
thy

thy of it; who can never do Enough
to Equal and Merit it; yet are en-
gaged to do all we can; And, after
all, to confess Our selves to be but
Unprofitable Servants: Having only
to Boast of, What God hath done for
Us, But Nothing to say of What We,
any of us, Are, or Can Do for Him.
So that This Obligation upon us is
Eternal; And we are Saved to be
Wholly God's: To Live to Him that
hath Bought and Redeem'd us for
Himself: Whose Service we have no
Right to Refuse or to Quit; Being
(as St. Paul tells us) not our own. I Cor. vi.
19.
The Greatness of this Salvation having
engaged All we can, with all our
Powers, to be able to do: For, saith
He, ye are bought with a Price; there-
fore glorify God in your Body, and in
your Spirit, which are God's. And if
then, when we have done All, we
shall have Nothing to Boast of; How
much have we, who do so Little, to
be Asham'd of, and to be Humbled for!
Inasmuch that a Sense of What we
Do,

Serm. II. *Do*, and of what we *should Do*, ought to make us Comply with our Obligations to *Do* all we *Can Do*; and to make us think we can never *Do too much* for *so Great a Salvation*.

This Consideration is, then, of further Use,

2. *To Caution us not to slight Salvation that is so Great.* Because *Great Matters*, treated as *Trifles*, is an intolerable *Abuse*. *Small Matters* may Excusably be *Not minded*: But *Salvation* is too *Great* to bear any *Disregard*. To which our Concern ought to be *Some-what Proportionable*; And the *Mercies of God* be *Esteemed*, not *Less*, or *Otherwise*, by us, than as they are valued being *Offered* to us. And yet, what a *Little Thing* do men, *Generally*, seem to *Esteem* this *So Great Salvation*, by their *Little* or *no Concern* for it! For what is there, Of any *Value* at all with us, that we do not regard more than *This*; which yet cannot be of near the *Concern and Importance* to us? Men
are,

are, to their Capacities, Wise and Industrious in Every thing but in Religion ! Which is more to them than Every thing besides : And without which, nothing they Esteem will, in a very little while, be of any Use or Value with them. And therefore any Neglect is more Excusable and less Prejudicial than our Neglect of Gospel-Salvation, which Deserves and Demands our utmost Regard, being the most Important of all our Concerns. And therefore, Again, This should serve

To excite in us an Esteem and Zeal for the Gospel of Christ. Because by it are conveyed to us the good Tidings of This so Great Salvation---Called therefore, The Gospel of our Salvation---Which, surely, for its Message-Sake, ought to be very Dear unto us ! For how Miserable is the Condition of Them who yet want it ! While they sit in Darkness, and in the Shadow of Death ; And, for ought we Know, or for any thing Revealed, to the con-

Serm. II.

3.

Luke ii. 10.

Eph. i. 13.

Luke i. 79.

Serm. II. contrary, will be likely to Perish.
 Everlastingly in utter Darkness, see-
 ing—there is no other Name under Hea-
 ven given among Men, whereby we must
 be saved; and which is no Other way,
 that the Scriptures mention, made
 Known, but by the Gospel! And yet,
 how Many are there; Great and
 Mighty Nations; from whom this
 Inestimable Mercy is with-held; while
 we are Bless'd, even to Satiety with
 it! Who Deserve it as little; and
 are, 'tis to be fear'd, as little the Bet-
 ter for it! Having been Guilty of
 Many and Great Forfeitures made of
 it! And instead of being Saved, have,
 for the most part, only Aggravated
 and Ascertain'd our own Damnation
 by it!

What an Unaccountable Mercy,
 then, is it; that we have the free
 Enjoyment of such a Gospel yet a-
 mong Us! Whereby alone we are
 Discriminated from the most Forlorn,
 Dark, Savage, and Heathenish Peo-
 ple in the World! And, ah, how

ought we to Prize and Improve by it! Harkning to its Message! Submitting to its Guidance! Walking by it's Light! Consulting it's Counsels! Familiarizing Ourselves to it! Delighting Ourselves with it! And making it our Business to search out it's Hidden Treasures, till we shall find It to be to Us, What It is in It self, the Gospel of our Salvation! Not only Proferring It to us, but Possessing us of It! Even of that Great Salvation, which is too Great to be Neglected! And the Neglect of which cannot Escape unpunished! Let this, then, further serve

To move Compassion for the astonishing Blindness of sinners. Who see Little in this So Great Salvation; And, against Reason, without Sense, do Slight and Neglect it: Which seems to be from a Judicial Hardness, justly inflicted on them by God; Obscuring the Worth, and abating the

D Esteem

IV.

Serm. II. Esteem of what they Wilfully prejudice themselves against.

Hence only it is, That Sinners,
 (Who live in Open Contempt of
 their *own Salvation* ; And Glory,
 not to be Persuaded to Quit their *Plea-
 sures of Sin*, to *work it out* --- while
 their Season last's) become, too soon,
 Stark Blind, and even *Dead in their
 Trespasses and Sins* --- to whom the
 Gospel is *hid*, as to *them that are lost*.
 Infomuch that Men, Otherwise of
 Good Uunderstanding, of Quick and
 Deep Apprehension in every thing
 else ; yet How Dull and Unaffected,
 Commonly are they, about the Im-
 portant Matters of *Salvation* ! To
 which they Harken without Con-
 cern ; and Disregard with Pleasure !
 Which being Explain'd and Urg'd to
 them, make a Noise in their Ears,
 But never Enlighten their Minds ;
 much less Affect their Hearts ! *They
 come unto thee* (as God spake to his
 Prophet) *as the People cometh ; and
 they sit before thee, as my People ; and
 they*

Ezekiel

xxxiii. 31.

they Hear thy Words ; but they will not Do them : for with their Mouth they shew much Love, but their Heart goeth after Covetousness. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely Song of One that hath a Pleasant Voice ; and can play well on an Instrument : for they Hear thy Words, but they Do them not.

Serm. II.

verse 32.

— They Hear the Nature and Worth of Gospel-Truths and Precepts Beautifully illustrated, and Persuasively recommended in order to Salvation ; But they, Generally, Savour them not : They like their Fleshly Lusts, and Worldly Interest much better : They Still Follow the Devices and Desires of their own hearts as much as ever : The Greatness of Salvation weighs Light with them : Being but as the Empty Relation of an Idle Story, or Fanciful Dream ; Which may Amuse, but cannot Profit ! So that, continuing Hearers , they will not be prevailed with to become Doers of the Word. Who shut their Eyes so fast and long, that no Ordinary Means

Jam. i. 22.

Serm. II. are ever able to Open them to see the
 Luke xix. things that belong to their Peace!

42.

Pf. CXXI. P.

—CXIX.

18.

Eph. i. 18.

Which is a most Deplorable State of Sin and Judgment, to be Bewail'd and Dreaded! And admonisheth us to Look up to God for Help, from whom alone our Help cometh --- to Open our Eyes to Behold the wondrous things out of his Law --- The Eyes of our Understanding being enlightned, that we may Know what is the Hope of his Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints.

- In a Word; may This then serve
 V. To make us all duely sensible of the Greatness of the Loss, should we at last fall short of so Great Salvation. Which, whatever we may now think of it, cannot be without an Unspeakable Damage, that will be sure to be Bewail'd, but can never be Repair'd; and for which we shall never be able to Forgive Ourselves. For, however unconcernedly it is slighted at present; And most Men can be well enough Content, upon
 very

very Trivial Occasions to forego it; *Serm. II.*
Yet, assure yourselves it will not al-
ways be so; nor any longer than till
your Eyes shall be Open'd, which
are now wofully shut; Or than
when, too late, your own insuppor-
table Loss shall have taught you the
Worth of what you now Despise;
When you will not be able to Want,
what will be impossible for you then
to Have.

None, therefore, but Fools or
Madmen, that will not, or cannot un-
derstand their Interest, would wil-
lingly hazard Losses that may be Pre-
vented, and cannot be Born. Which
ought to be Dreaded and Shunn'd,
as *too Great* to be Neglected, and *Great*
enough to Recompence any Pains to
Escape them.

The Sum of all is, --- That under
this Sense, and with this View, we *Phil.ii.12.*
would *work out our own Salvation*
with fear and trembling --- *Fearing to*
Miss of so Great a Blessing! Trem-
bling at the Hazards we are under of

Serm. II. *So Evil a Threatning! And, in the Name, and thro' the Assistance of God, Working our way thro' whatever Difficulties and Discouragements, as becometh Those who Obey the Highest Authority, in Pursuit of the Weightiest Concernment, with all the Powers of Nature and Grace, Giving*
 Mar. iii. 7. *all Diligence --- to flee from the Wrath*
 2 Pet. i. 10. *to come, and to make our calling and*
 --- II. *Election sure --- that so an Entrance*
 7 *may be ministred unto us Abundantly in-*
to the Everlasting Kingdom of our Lord
and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

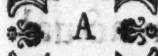




S E R M O N III.

HEBR. II. 3.

*How shall we Escape, if we Neglect So
Great Salvation? ---*

 **ANOTHER** Particular ob- Serm. III.
 **A** serv'd in these Words was, Obs. III.
 *That this very Great Salva-*
tion is but too Commonly, and
most Unreasonably Neglected among us.

This is the Supposition upon which
 the Dissuasion in the Text is ground-
 ed. --- If ye Neglect --- implying that
 all are Liable, and that most will be
 Likely to Neglect Salvation. And
 therefore to illustrate This profitably,
 I will now Explain the Nature of the
 Sin, Here condemn'd, of Neglect-

Serm. III.

ing --- Mention some particular Instances wherein men are guilty of it --- Warn you of the Reasons and Occasions of their being so --- And Infer thence the Duties incumbent on us with particular Relation to it.

- I. *The Nature of this Sin, Here condemn'd, of Neglecting so Great Salvation, will be best explain'd, by Observing that as it is a Bare Neglect; So it is not every Kind of Neglect that is Here condemn'd.*

A Bare Neglect is a Sin short of a Direct Opposition to, and of an actual Renunciation of Salvation by Christ, of which, men are Generally aware; and not so Easily and soon Seduced to: Not without some Reluctance; And after the Contraction of a confirm'd Habit.

For there are but Few, that ever arrive to such a Degree of Obduracy as Openly to Renounce their Salvation, or Designedly to Resolve and Act against it. Whereas Multitudes, we see, there

there are, that will do *Little or No-thing* of what they *Ought and Might* do for it. Who are, it may be, altogether *Unconcern'd*, For or against it : And are as *Averse* from taking Pains to be *Saved*, as they are *Afraid* to Resolve to be *Damn'd*.

Too Many, we may observe, who are usually accounted among the *Better*, and are none of the *Worst Sort* of Men ; Who are strictly careful to *Live Peaceably*, and to *Deal Honestly*, with all Men, in Detestation of the *Open Debaucheries*, and *Scandalous Vices* of the Age ; Who, therefore, will *Hope well*, because they *do not* so *ill* as Others ; and yet are *Notoriously Faulty* in *Neglecting* the much *Good* they *Ought*, and *Might do to be Saved* : Being, all this while, great *Neglecters* of *Holy Duties and Ordinances*, and very *Indifferent and Inconstant* in the *Use of the Appointed Means of Grace and Salvation* : Allowing themselves but *Little Time* and *Less Care* for *Spiritual Exercises* : Trusting that they
are

Serm. III.

are Good enough, because Others are Worse : And presuming to be Excused from Doing more, because they do some Little of what they Ought to do.

Whereas This is the very Sin, under the Apostle's Correction, in the Text : Condemning not so much Men's Open and Bold *Defiance of Salvation* (This every one knows to be *Damnable*) as their Supine and Lazy Neglect of it ; in order to excite all to make it their *Principal Business*, as it is their *Principal Interest* to be Saved.

For So great a *Salvation* cannot admit of the least Wilful Omissions : Inasmuch that He who doth not Do all he Morally Can Do, will not have Done all he Reasonably ought to have done for it. And therefore, it is not only Forbearing the more Gross Sins, but a Sincere and Uniform Doing all our Duty that is required from us. Even bare Neglects may become *Damnable Faults*. And not only that *Servant*,

who is so *Insolent* as to fly in the Face of his Master : But no less He, who is so *Lazy* as to leave his Commands Undone, will deserve to be *beaten* with many Stripes. Nevertheless (as was said) it is not Absolutely every Kind of Neglect that is here condemned. Because there may be, and there are, Some, indeed too Many, Neglects in the very Best of us. Who cannot be so sedulous, as to Escape all Deficiencies. And, reflecting on the Best of our Performances to Comfort, we may perceive Failings enough to Humble Us. An Unerring Obedience being inconsistent with our present State of Trial and Impotence. Neither may we say that any Man is so Bad, but that he may Amend ; And, thro' the Power of God's Grace, become Better : Correct his present Neglect of Salvation, so as by his future Care and Diligence he may Escape the Hazards of Damnation : Seeing no Sin is finally Unpardonable, that is not persisted in Impenitently. And therefore

Serm. III.

fore the Sinful Neglect, here reprehended, must be limited to That alone which is *Voluntary* and *Final*. Being both what is *Indulg'd*, and never *Reform'd*.

Neglects that we cannot Help, and do heartily Strive against and Grieve for, will not prejudice us. And our Neglects that we can Help, Whenever we do Help and Reform them, God will Remit and Pardon to us. But Those we will not go about to Prevent, but Unconcernedly Persist in to the End; Those alone are the Neglects of our Salvation, that will not Suffer us always to Escape Damnation.

For God requires of No one beyond what he is Able. So that if we are but Careful to our Power, And endeavour to amend our Faults as soon as we perceive them, we shall have done all that is required, Because all we can do; and shall not be Challeng'd or Suffer for Neglect, tho' we may not do all that might have been done

done for Salvation. Whence the Sin Serm. III.
 lies only in the *Insincerity* of Mens
 Endeavours, and in the *Obstinacy* of
 their Wills : When they will neither
 do what they might, nor yet be
 Grieved, nor endeavour to do what
 they Ought. That this is no *Uncom-*
mon Sin will appear from the next
 Particular proposed ; which was to

Mention some Particular Instances of II.
Men's becoming Guilty of it. Whose
Voluntary and Final Neglect of so Great
Salvation is very Evident from

Their Inconvincedness, by what- I.
ever Instruction, Reproof and Persua-
sion that can be given them. Which,
tho' I deny not, but that This may
be the Effect of a Judicial Obduracy ;
yet, at first, could be justly charge-
able on Nothing but Men's own Wil-
ful Carelessness ; which in Righteous-
ness may have brought this sad Judg-
ment from God upon them : That
Seeing they may See, and not Perceive ;
and Hearing they may Hear, and not Mar. iv.
Under- 12.

Serm. III.

Understand---It being Equal and U-
 fual with God to Confirm those in
Blindness and *Ignorance*, that will nei-
 ther *See* nor *Hear*, when they May,
 and are Call'd upon and Assisted to
 do Both. Who, would they have
 had any Common Regard or Care of
 Attending to Either, could have
 Omitted Neither. For there never
 wants so Much to do to Persuade
 Men to any thing they are really
Concerned for. And whom therefore
 Nothing can Persuade, we rightly
 conclude to be *Unconcern'd*; and
 about nothing more so, than about
 the Matters of *Salvation*: Insomuch
 that all they Hear said, and Know to
 be Truth and Reason; which they
 never go about to Gain-say; yea,
 seem not to be Displeased with; yet
 Prevails no further than only to get
 their bare Hearing (tho' not always
 so much as That) which they quick-
 ly Forget, and easily Disregard. So
 that let what will be said, Nothing
 shall *Convince* or *Convert* them from
 con-

continuing to *do as they list*, or as *they ever have done*. Serm. III.

Or, if at any time, some Word should happen to fasten on them, too Powerful to be Slighted, and Strong enough to Convict; yet Men's Neglect, further, appears by

Their Delay to Resolve and Endeavour. For were they not very Negligent, As there would never need so very much to do to Persuade them to Mind what they Know to be their Chief Interest; so, being Persuaded, if they were not further Negligent, they could never be so senseless as to Delay, or be so long in Resolving to begin their Endeavours to be Saved. Because, in such Case, Delay is but a mere Shift, Not to Do, what they have no Inclination for. The Mind, being Convinc'd, the Will remains Inflexible. Were This also Compliant, the Man would be Anxious to Dispatch what he hath a Concern for; and be Restless till it were done. Because, what must be done, and

2.

Serm. III.

and is Resolv'd to be done, the sooner it is done the Better. And no one can assign a Better, or any Other Reason, why he Presently does it not, than only because he is Negligent, and cares not to do it at all, or at least Not so long as he could avoid it. So that Delay in Matters of Importance and Duty, can be the Effect of only Neglect and a Want of due Concernment. Whereby too many, (God Know's) under actual Convictions of the Necessity, do Unreasonably Omit the Practice, of *working out their own salvation.*

Yea, having immediately Resolv'd (which is no Rare thing) upon some suddain Conviction; yet Men's Neglect may be further manifested by

3. *Their Cold and Slow Progress in the matters of Salvation.* For it is only Concern that make's Active, and Care that gain's Success in Business. And where then, we see men so very Slow and Faint, we cannot but conclude their Want of Concern and Care.

Tho' therefore, Men are *Convinc'd* Serm. III.
of the Importance of their Duty;
And do *Resolve* in the Use of Means
to Endeavour it; yet while they do
This *Lazily*, with great *Indifference*,
without *Life* and *Labour*, they betray
their *Negligence*; Had it not been
for Which, they would have done
a great deal more and Better. It be-
ing *Neglect* alone, that (Bating the
Interpositions of special Providence)
doth cast men Behind-hand in their
Honest Undertakings. And how
much further would more Care and
a greater Concern have set the most
Forward in their Business of *Salvati-*
on; Wherein there is never wanting
the almighty Grace of God's Spirit
to Support and Assist them! So that
the *Little* we do, and the *Little While*
we have been a doing it, is but too
sad a Proof of our *Neglect* in this
great Concern of our *Salvation*.

But what alone will suffice to prove
this, Moreover, is

Serm. III.

4.

The greater Concern, the Generality of men have, for Present Worldly Matters. For who is there, that doth not Ordinarily Shew more Care and Diligence in his *Temporal* than in his *Spiritual Affairs*? Which yet none can without a Blameable Neglect, because of the less Concern and Value *Those* are to us. For *Salvation* is the *Greatest Concern* we have; Which therefore ought to be *Regarded Most*. To which Every thing else ought to give Way: But This to none else; Because none else can concern us so much. And therefore, to mind any thing else more, is to Regard This too Little! Which, not made our very Chief and Greatest Business, will be justly accounted to have been *Neglected*; It being too *Great* to suffer any Other to be Regarded before it.

But, because This will seem somewhat *Hard to Flesh and Blood*, Wherein we live by *Sense*, and are Delighted with *Present Enjoyments*; There-
fore

fore it may be added as another Manifestation of *Neglecting Salvation*,

Men's General Disregard of the Gospel-Terms and Conditions of Obtaining it. Who endeavour not so much to bring their *Lives* up to *Them*, as to bring *Them* down to their *Lives*. They Are Unwilling to part with some *Darling Lusts* : Or to submit to the Severity of some *Christian-Duties* : And Presume, notwithstanding, to get to *Heaven*, upon *Other* and *Easier Terms* than what are there required.

5.

Whereas *Salvation* is far *Greater*, than the *Utmost Price* that is set upon it to us. Which Certainly is a very *Great Bargain* to us, upon any *Possible Terms* ! So that for any to find Fault ; Or to think much, and Boggle at any *Difficulty*, is a *Disrespect* unbecoming it's *Greatness* ! An *Undervaluing* of it's *Worth* ! And a *Neglect* of it in it's *Appointed Means* ! And therefore, it is not for any to chuse his own *Terms* ; And to Comply only so far

Serm. III.

as he Himself shall think Good : Because the *Terms* are God's ; and the *Means* are settled ; to be neither *Alter'd* nor *Abated* at Man's Pleasure, for Ease or Convenience ; And not Sincerely to Comply with Every thing that is made our Duty, So far as we are able, will be to Neglect, in not Doing what we Ought and Might have done for Salvation.

And, then, Finally, This is no less Evidenc'd by

6. Men's not making it so Sure to themselves, as they might. For, tho' All would be Saved, yet Most are afraid of doing more than just may serve their turn for that End. If they can but Escape Damnation, it is All they care for. Few being Ambitious of a Place in Abraham's Bosom, So they come not into Dives's State of Torments. Whereas of things which men's Hearts are set on, they Usually think they can never have enough. Whereof the More they have, the More they would have. Who Still

keep on Toiling to increase their ^{Serm. III.} greatest Worldly *Abundance*; Of which *Abundance* they may have *too Much*; And of which, *Abundance* is not always *Best* for them. And therefore, to be so soon and Easily Satisfy'd: To be Careless or Indifferent to increase what there can never be *too Much* of; But what is always in danger of being *too Little*; must necessarily argue a Culpable Neglect: Which is in nothing more Notorious, than in the Great Concern of our *Salvation*.

And now Considering all this together (How *Hardly* Men are *Persuaded* to take due Care of their *Salvation*: How ready to *Delay* their Resolutions and Endeavours for it: How *Slow and Cold* in their Prosecutions of it: How apt to *Mind Other Concerns* before it: How loath to Comply with the *stated Means and Terms of it*: And How afraid of *Doing too Much*, and *More than needs must*, for it --- Laying, I say, all This together)

E 3

Sern. III.

ther) How Evident will the *Nature* and *Kind of the Sin*, Here Reproved, appear to us? Whereby Every One may profitably *Examine* his own *Conduct*, in order to *Bewail* and *Amend* his own *Guilt*. To promote this, I proceed Now, also, as was proposed,

III. To warn you of the *Reason and Occasions of this Sin*: The *Neglect* being as *Unreasonable*, as our *Salvation* is *Great*. By understanding the *Causes* whereof, we shall be directed to remove it's *Guilt*.

For therefore men *Neglect* their *So Great Salvation*,

I. Thro' their want of a *Belief* of it. Not that I can suppose, that any of you do verily *Disbelieve* the things relating to *Salvation* (So as to think Really there is no such *State*; Or that you have no need of it; Or that it may be had without *Caring* for; Or notwithstanding your never so great *Neglect* of it,) being so *Plainly* and *Frequently* inculcated upon

upon you both from God's *Written Word*, and the Suggestions of His Vicegerent, your own *Conscience* within you. Infomuch that all are ready enough to profess their *Belief* of these Truths; But Few attend to them as they should; Or Consider what it is to *Believe* so as to be ever the Better for their *Belief*. Which therefore is in them *Unbelief* in the *Act*, whatever it may be said to be in the *Habit*. For as men *Think*, so they will in that Instant *Act*. Because the *Will* must necessarily follow the Present *Judgment*. And therefore, they *Act amiss*, Only because they *Think amiss*. Who, Consequently, *Neglect their Salvation*, Only because they did not, at that time, *Actually Believe and Consider it*. For a Present and thorough *Belief* of it, would have necessarily struck such an awful Impression into the Spirit of a Serious Considerer, as would fill and wholly *Engage his Mind*; Bear down his *Will*; And be an Effectual Re-

Serm. III.

strait upon all his Motions ; So as not to fail to keep him within the Compass of his Duty, and to excite him to the Utmost of his Powers. For a Man that can be *Negligent* under the actual Power of *Faith* and *Consideration* ; What is there left that can Possibly Oblige and Quicken Him to Regard ? 'Tis only his Recovery of *Thought* that must put him upon it. And, if he may be supposed to *Neglect* under the Impression of That, there can be no Other Means imagined to be left to Reduce him. So that we must conclude all Men's *Neglect* to proceed from only the Want of a *Present Belief* and an *Actual Consideration* : Which is the *Infidelity* that lurks at the bottom of all Sin. And could we but always *actually Attend* to our *Habitual Belief*, we should never *Neglect* ; Because Men do so, only thro' their Want of *Recollection* and *Application* of What they do *Believe*.

To

To which, likewise, Men are apt Serm. III.
to be Seduced,

2.

Thro' their *Worldly Affections* and *Employments*. Which, being *Present* and *Visible*, strike powerfully upon *Sense*, and create *Earthy Desires* that interrupt and diminish the Activity of *Heavenly Affections*; Represent *Salvation* as Something *Remote*; And lessen it's *Greatness* by it's *Distance*: On which looking by *Faith*, and not by *Sight*, we see more *Obscurely*, and with less *Certainty*, than we do *Objects* represented to our *Bodily Eyes*, More suited and *Endeared* to our *Present Necessities*. And therefore the more we *Mind Earthly*, the less we shall be apt to *Care for Heavenly Things*. Who, Usually, *Neglect* our *Solvation* thro' Nothing more, than our too great *Sollicitousness* after *Present Enjoyments*. Who are therefore, necessitated to *retrench* and *abate* our *Concern for This World*, before we can have *List* and *Leisure* to *Regard*, as we should, the *Other*: To remember

Serm. III.



ber that tho' the things of Eternity seem to be at a greater Distance, yet they are as Real and Certain as if Actually Present: That they may be a great deal nearer to us than we think they are: That nothing but Death is between Them and Us, which we have reason every moment to expect; It cannot be Long e're it happen; And Then *Salvation*, not having been *neglected* by us, will be *Present* and *Perfected* to us; When all this *World* will be for Ever *Absent*, and at a far greater *Distance*, than ever That was, from us; Which now engrosseth our Care, and interrupts our Endeavours, Even to a *Neglect* of what alone we *Need*. Therefore we are called upon to *Set our Affections on things above, not on things on the Earth* --- Being incapable to mind Both alike. Who cannot serve two Contrary Masters with the same Affection. So that our *Neglect* of *things above* proceeding from our Affection for *things on the Earth*,
 we

Col. iii. 2.

Luke xvi.
13.

we shall be always apt to Neglect our *Salvation* more, unless we regard *Present Enjoyments* less. A further Reason why we do not ; But still continue our Neglect, may be

Serm. III.

Thro' a false Presumption of being, at any time, safe by Repentance. Which men are willing to think an Easie, Short and Arbitrary Matter, that requires not much of either Care or Time ; but, if need be, may be dispatched in a Trice ; When one listeth ; In a few of our Last Hours ; In a few Good Prayers, Or by Even One formal *Lord have Mercy upon me,* on a Sick-Bed.

3.

Hence too many encourage themselves to Defer the Trouble of Caring for their *Salvation* Some Time longer : Presuming they shall have Enough left for That, when the Present Opportunities and Season for Sensual Pleasures and Worldly Enjoyments shall be nearer to an End, and more tiresome to them. Whenas did they but duly Consider, and were

Serm. III.

were But thoroughly Affected with the Difficulties of Repentance, the Uncertainty of Leisure, and the Precariousness of a Capacity for it, Men durst never Neglect One Moment, lest they should not have Another, or not Enough, or none so Favourable for such an Undertaking.

For Repentance is, not only Sorrowing for our Past Sins; Wishing that they had never been; and Begging God's Pardon for them (which is but One Part, and That the least Essential Part of it.) But it is a Doing otherwise; and, as much as in us lies, an Unliving the Sins we have Liv'd in; By labouring after the contrary Habits of Vertue; And by Exercising and Approving the Truth of our Vertues, thro' Many and Great Tryals, which we shall be sure to Meet with in this World. Which is a Work of Pains and Time, wholly in the Hand of God; To be wrought out by Us, with Him, according to his Good Pleasure, working in Us to

Will

Phil. ii. 13.

Will and to Do: On whose Motions Serm. III.
we ought continually to Attend, and
make our best Advantage of; with-
out which *we can do Nothing*; and
with which, all we can do, will be
Little enough of what we Ought,
and shall One Day Wish to have
done, to *make our Calling and Election*
sure.

Wherein, even yet again, we are
but too much tempted to Neglect,
Thro' a Misconceit of God's Mercifulness. Which Sinners would fain
believe to be too Great, ever to suf-
fer any to be *Eternally Damn'd* for
only *Neglecting* their Care, in Time,
to be *Saved.* Presuming that God
will not, at last, be so severe as his
Threats are. Which, tho' he would
have to *Fright* Men to their Duty,
yet they cannot think He will be so
Cruel as to *Execute* them for only
Neglects of it. Who, while they
thus Extend God's Mercy to favour
their own Corruptions, it is no
Wonder if they slight His *Veracity*
and

Serm. III.

and *Justice*, by which they are Urged to Mortify and Reform them. They forget that by thus Enlarging God's *Lenity*, and stretching it beyond the Bounds of his *Word*, they Enervate God's *Truth*, and make his *Threatnings* to be of no Effect. And if his *Threatnings* signify so little, what Assurance can we have that his *Promises* signify more? For it is the same God, in the same Manner, that both Threatens and Promiseth: Whose Faithfulness is equally engaged to make Good, the One, as the Other. And therefore, we may as Reasonably Fear that He will not be so Gracious to them that Obey him, as Hope that He will be more Merciful, than He hath said He will be, to them that Rebel against Him. Which is not only to *make God a Liar*, but to Venture also Our own *Salvation* upon it. But what Shifts will not Men fly to, for the Sake of their Sins! Which, because they cannot quietly, in Defiance or with Despair

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of

of Mercy, retain ; How will they stretch it to their own Length, beyond itself, to a Fineness that will bear no Weight ; which yet is all they Hang by ; and have to Trust to, from Dropping down into the Bottomless Lake, at last, that for Ever burneth with Fire and Brimstone ! And what a Lamentable Truth hence is it to Affirm, That More are Probably Destroy'd, than Saved by the Mercifulness of God's Nature ! On which Presuming, Men are so Prone to Neglect their own Salvation !

Serm. III.

Rev. xxi.
8.

But after all, it must be Confess'd, that the Original and Principal Cause of such Neglect is

Men's Love for their Sins. Which lieth at the Bottom of all Neglect ; and is really That which first makes Men Unbelieving and Inconsiderate, Worldly-Minded and Carnal, Slighting of Repentance, And Presuming on Divine Mercy ; which are all but mere Shifts to save Beloved Sins ; and, for their Sakes, to Countenance any

5.

Serm. III.

any Unreasonable Neglect of Salvation. Infomuch, that could we but once see and Think *Sin as it is*, And Fear and Forsake it *as we Ought*, Being the Greatest Evil; The Great Concern of Salvation would be always Present to us, and be Chiefly Regarded by us, Being our Only Good. From which, there would be Nothing to Divert us, Nothing to Prejudice us. Whereas, Regarding Iniquity in our Heart, we shall always Neglect Salvation by our Lives; And lose our Souls, by also desiring to save our Sins. Finally,

IV.

The Duties to be Hence inferr'd ought to be, As our Humiliation for Neglects, so our Condemnation of all Oppositions to so Great-Salvation. For We have great reason to be Humbled for our Neglecting so Great-Salvation. Because we thereby so Miserably Impose upon Ourselves, to be Undone by only our own Carelessness: Which a due Regard, for a short time, would have

have *Prevented*, and might yet *Re-*
trieve. To be a *Fallen Creature* is
Deplorable enough; But to *Neglect*
to Rise, when *Salvation* is proffer'd,
 by which we may, if we will be but
Careful, *Advance* Ourselves to a *Bet-*
ter State, than ever we were in, or
Capable of Before; This will prove
 a Thought that will imbitter *Reflecti-*
on and render *Misery* inexpressible;
 No more to be *Born* than to be *Freed*
 from for Ever!

But, if to *Neglect Salvation* be the
Sin Here *Condemn'd*, then much
 more *Damnable* will be all those
Grosser Sins, which by their aggrava-
 ting Nature *Exceed* this *Neglect*, and
 by their Opposition *Frustrate* the *Means*
 of *Salvation*.

Of which They are Guilty, *Who*
Entice to *Sin*, and *Discourage* from
Duty. Who not only Quietly Per-
 mit (whom they Ought and Might
Restrain) to live *Heedlessly*; But al-
 so *Wilfully* *Divert* and *Disturb* those
 that

Serm. III. that would be more Careful of their
Salvation.

Among these, I am sure, are concerned all such as, having *Authority* to suppress Vice, and Promote Religion, do Neglect to use their Power, where they Ought and Might, to reduce men to Regard more their *Salvation*: By shewing their Zeal to Discourage and Punish *Common-Swearers, Drunkards, Sabbath-Breakers,* and Habitual *Absenters* from the Instituted Ordinances of Religion in Publick; which are the Ordinary Means of *Salvation*; Neglected the more, no doubt, for the *Magistrates's* Connivance; Who involve themselves thereby to *Partake of Other's Sins.*

In like manner, all *Governors, Masters of Familys,* and *Parents* will deserve Rebuke; Who take no Care how Those under their Government live: Nor ever Instruct, Or Call upon them to mind their *own Salvation*; Nor Oblige them to a Constant Attendance in the House of God, where they

they may be duely Instructed and Admonished : Sadly leaving them at Liberty to Neglect God, and their own Souls, so they do but discharge themselves well in their Worldly Business.

But, Most of all, Damnable will those Profligate Wretches Hence appear to be; who Detain, or Draw off their Companions from Minding the things which make for their Spiritual and Everlasting Peace; by Enticing them from Places of Publick Worship, to Places of Licentiousness, Excess, and Uncleaness; Or to Mis-spend the most Sacred Times, consecrated for the Service of the Soul, in mere Idleness, or Entertainments at Home; Or in Unseasonable Walks and Visits abroad, for Indulgence to the Flesh: Who make a Mock at Sin: A Jest of Serious Holiness: Deriding and Reproaching, to Discourage the very Shew of it: yea, so little valuing Salvation, as (who, but hath heard some) Merrily to

Serm. III.

Invoke God's Damnation on Themselves and Others!

Blessed God! what shall we say to such Sinners? Or what can they have to say for themselves? When God shall (as most Surely he will) accompt with them for all these Things! Either these People do Believe the Gospel to be True, Or they do not: If they do not; why do they not Renounce it? If they do Believe it, why do they Act against it so very much more than even Jews and Turks, who Disbelieve it? Yea why are they not Ashamed of their gross Hypocrisie, to Profess one thing; and Act another? And of their mischievous Dissimulation, (like that of the Scribes and Pharisees) neither Entering into the Kingdom of Heaven themselves; nor Suffering them that would, to Enter in.

Mat. xxiii.

13.

It were Highly to be Wish'd, That Every One would, in his Place, concern Himself more Openly and Heartily for the Encouragement and Furtherance

therance of One Another's *Salvation* : Serm. III.

And lay more Closely to Heart the General and Shameful *Neglect* it suffereth under (Or rather We Ourselves suffer by it) in these Dregs of Time which we are cast into ! Wherein *Godliness* so Fast and Visibly declines ; And almost all Kind of Abominable *Iniquity* so Daringly and Impudently *abounds* !

For we are Commanded not only to be *Holy*, and to *Walk Circumspectly* Ourselves ; But to Endeavour to *Convert the Sinner from the Error of his way* --- Not to *suffer Sin upon our Brother* --- And to *Recover* those out of the *Snare of the Devil*, who are taken *Captive by him at his will*. And Why, then, should we not shew Ourselves as Active and Bold for Men's *Salvation*, as too many, shamelessly do to *Reproach* and *Hinder* it ; Even for their *Damnation* ?

Jam. v. 20.
Lev. xix.
17.
2 Tim. ii.
26.

It is a noble Design to be Engaged and Confederated in ! And it can be neither Commendable nor Safe to

Serm. III.

Decline or Desert it! For it is the Chief End of our Being, and Callings, to Reform a Wicked World and Age, by Promoting, all we can, Virtue and strict Holiness of Life in them! Wherein no man can live to any Other Good Purpose.

Ordering, therefore, our own Conversions aright, set we forward, in the Use of all Proper Means, the Edification of our Neighbours. Accounting it not only our Duty, But our Honour, Our Pleasure, Our Profit, Our Necessity, to have our Hands in This Blessed and Glorious Work.

Heb. x. 24.

Prowoking One another [Not any longer to Wrath, Revenge, and Wickedness, but] unto Love and to Good Works.

Phil. iv. 8.

[Even to Whatsoever things are True; Whatsoever things are Honest; Whatsoever things are Just; Whatsoever things are Pure; Whatsoever things are Lovely; Whatsoever things are of Good Report — [Doing all Heartily as to

Col. iii. 23.

the Lord! To the Bettering of the World; To the Rejoicing of the Elect

Elect! And to the saving of Souls Serm. III.
in the Great Day of the Lord Jesus!
Which may not be Neglected but to
our own Everlasting Loss and Ruin!
For How shall we Escape, if we Ne-
glect so Great Salvation?





S E R M O N IV.



H E B R. II. 3.

How shall we Escape, if we Neglect So Great Salvation?

Serm. IV.

T H E Last Particular proposed to be spoke to from these Words is

Obf. IV. *That such as do Neglect so Great Salvation cannot possibly Escape.*

This the Apostle hath *Emphatically* exprefs'd by way of *Interrogation*: [*How shall we Escape?*] thereby intimating the *Certainty*, the *Unavoidableness*, the *Soreness* of the *Punishment*, consequent of the *Guilt*.

The

The Confirmation and Application of Serm. IV.
 This will be most Effectually Urged
 from the very *Words* before us: which
 need no Other Light, but their own,
 to illustrate the *Truth*, and exert the
 Force of what they import. It ap-
 pearing How *Inevitable*, How *Certain*,
 How *Insupportable* the Punishment of
 Neglecting so Great Salvation will be
 likely to prove, From it's very being
 Salvation: Much more from it's being
 so Great: From it's having been Neg-
 lected: And that by Even *Us*.
 Which being all Circumstances aggra-
 vating Guilt, *How Shall We*; [None
 Shall, None Can] *Escape*, if we
 Neglect so Great Salvation---For con-
 sider,

It is Salvation we Neglect--Which I.
 is the Only Deliverance by which we
 may Hope to *Escape*. Which there-
 fore, being *Neglected*, will necessarily
 make an *Escape* Impossible to us;
 because the Means and Opportunity
 of *Escaping* will be lost with it.

I

For

Serm. IV.

For to Escape, and to be Saved, are (in Reference to our Final State) *Synonymous* Terms; importing One and the same thing; Inſomuch, that to be Saved, is to Escape; And to Neglect Salvation, is to Neglect our Escape. And How ſhall we Escape, if we Neglect it? Or Hope to be Saved, while we Diſregard both the Time and Means of Eſcaping? For God hath ſhewn us but One only way of Eſcaping; which is by the Salvation of the Goſpel; Delivering from the Guilt and Dominion of Sin, by Pardoning our Offences and Sanctifying our Perſons; Reconciling us to God, and Capacitating us to Pleaſe him thro' Chriſt: which is every way Sufficient; and All that is Neceſſary for our Eſcaping Everlaſting Ruin. Which therefore to Neglect, is to Neglect our Laſt and Only Remedy! Whereby, after our never ſo many Slips and long Neglects; if we Forſake our Sins and Turn to God, we may while it is

Our Power, Even yet Hope to find
One way to Escape, and may not Doubt
that to be Saved. But if we persist to
Neglect This; then All is lost, Be-
cause there is no Other Expedient
left; This being the Only Salvation,
whereby to Escape. Especially,
seeing also,

This is so Great Salvation. The
Greatness of which will be an
Aggravation of our Guilt, if we
Neglect it. For, after that God hath
done so Great things for us: whereby
he hath put our Escape into our own
Hands, and hath Consulted no less
our Interest, than He hath Condescen-
ded to our Infirmities, infinitely be-
yond not only our Deserts, but also
Expectations; What can He, any
Other way, do more to Save us;
Who, Neglect to Escape, Now we
may, by This Salvation? If all that
hath been already done for Us, prove
not sufficient; it is certain Nothing,
that will or can be done More, or
Other-

II.

Serm. IV.

Otherwise, for our *Escape*, can possibly *save us*. Neither can we be *Deserving* of Further Mercy, or Hope for Future Favour, having *Received* This *Grace of God in vain*, who continue to *Despise* so *Great Salvation*. Where so much proves *Lost* and *Ill-Bestow'd*, there is great Reason not only to *Fear* no more will be *Granted*: But to *Expect* that This will be proportionably *Revenged*. Because the Greater the Favour, the Greater the *Provocation* of *Neglecting* it, and the Less Mercy will remain due to such *Neglecters*.

And therefore, *How shall we Escape* [Or Hope for any Other *Salvation* from God ; Or not *Expect* to be *Punish'd* Greatly] if we *neglect* so *Great Salvation* ? Which is too *Great*, for any to make *Little* of ; Or for God to suffer to be *Thrown away*, unrevenged, upon us. *Great* and *Extraordinary Favours* are not to be *Presum'd* upon. The *Neglect* of *small Kindnesses* may be *Pass'd over*: But the

the Abuse of much Love Generally
ends in Great Hatred. So that it can-
not be, but that, after all This, which
God hath done to save us, Our Ne-
glect of so Great Salvation must inevi-
tably Expose us to as Great a Dam-
nation.

To this Purpose, it will deserve
well our Serious and Often Consid-
eration, What our Apostle, in this
Epistle, hath, Elsewhere, Excellent-
ly argued --- If, saith He, we sin Wil-
fully after that we have Received the
Knowledge of the Truth, there Remain-
eth no more Sacrifice for Sins. [Not
as if Every Wilful Sin under the Gos-
pel were Unpardonable. It being on-
ly the Wilful Slighting and Reject-
ing of the Gospel-Salvation by a Fi-
nal Apostacy, that is Here spoken of:
Which, being the Only Appointed
Means, leaves, if Neglected, no Pos-
sibility of Escaping the State of Guilt
and Damnation] But a certain fear-
ful Looking for of Judgment and fiery
Indignation, which shall devour the Ad-
versary

Chap. x.
26.

Verse 27.

Serm. IV.

Verse 28,

— 29,

— 30,

— 31.

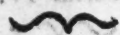
versaries. He that Despised Moses
 Law died without Mercy— Of
 much sorer Punishment, suppose ye
 shall He be thought worthy, who hath
 trodden under foot the Son of God, and
 hath counted the Blood of the Covenant
 wherewith he was Sanctified, an Unholy
 Thing, and hath done Despight unto
 the Spirit of Grace? For we know He
 that hath said, Vengeance belongeth
 to Me; I will Recompence, saith the
 Lord. And again, The Lord shall
 Judge his People. It is a fearful thing
 to fall into the Hands of the Living
 God! — Read— Consider— Fear—
 Tremble at This, the Divine Resentment
 of our Gospel-Neglects! Of what
 Great Obligation, is so Great Salvation
 to be Regarded by us! Not wilfully
 to be slighted, but (it seems) to be
 our Utmost Peril! The Revengement
 whereof God will take into his
 own Hands! Will Recompence it with
 sorer Punishment, than even Those
 suffer, who are Punished without Mer-
 cy! And to fall into the Hands of the

Living

Living, Revenging and Unmerciful
God (For after this strange manner
He is here represented) What *Pro-
vocation*! What *Guilt*! What *Misery*
doth This suppose and Appropriate
to the Great Sin of *Neglecting* so Great
Salvation! Which, meriting the hea-
viest *Vengeance*, will find the *Least*
Mercy--- Less than Those that *Died*
without Mercy! And How then shall
we Escape, if *we* *Persist* in the *Guilt*
of it? For even yet, Further, the *Pro-
vocation* riseth Higher, in that, also,
It is *Neglected* --- Which implyeth
it to be lost thro' mere *Carelessness* ---
For want of only a little *Considera-
tion*! A little *Attendance*; that is nei-
ther *Impossible* nor *Unreasonable*; And
therefore, the more *Inexcusable* and
Provoking in us. By which we Re-
flect on the *Love, Wisdom, and Care*
of God for us: As if what He so
much Regarded for our Good, We
thought not worth our Notice to
have

III.

Serm. IV.



have any Regard for Ourselves from
 Who rather Concern'd Ourselves more
 about mere Trifles; And let go our *escape*
 so Great *Salvation*; for Every Perishing *vation*
 Little Vanity! And What is This Su
 But, in Effect to tell God to his faces In
 That He over-values his own *Love* neglect
 while He speaks to us, in his Go Have
 pel, so magnificently of Man's *sa* His
vation by Christ. Whereas We are He b
 of another Mind; And see no such *Chan*
 Great Matter in it! What is it? Buny
 to set His *Wisdom* also at naught i Ever
 this High Dispensation; And mak it is c
 Ourselves Wiser in Neglecting tha wha
 He in *Contriving* it! What? But toring
 Confront the Authority of his *Comme* P
mands! To Defie the Power of Hi A
Threats! To Ridicule the Easiness hat
 of his *Promises*! And to allow God *It*
 to say *what he will*, but assume to our O
 selves to *Do what We list*, And any aid
 thing rather than *What He would have* of a
us to Do! --- And can we think tha *Esca*
 God (who is so Jealous of his Hois w
 nour) will ever bear such *Affronts* *ati*
 from

lives from his Creatures? Or provide any Serm. IV.
 elevenore favourable way for them to E-
 scape, who Neglect This So Great Sal-
 vation?

This Surely --- Neglect, in such a Case,
 faces Intolerable! And He that will Ne-
 glect his Salvation, What would He
 Go Have? What would He mind for
 his Escape? Insomuch, that if ever
 he be Saved, it must be by mere
 chance, or by pure Force; Without
 any Endeavours of His Own, and
 even Whether he will or no! And when
 it is once come to This, (which is just
 what our present Neglect implies and
 torings it to) How shall we Escape if
 we Persist in it? ---

Of Him Above all, Considering, in fine
 that

God *It is We* --- Who are Christians ---
 our On which the Apostle seems to have
 anyaid an Emphasis in the Text) Who
 have of all Persons, shall be sure not to
 the Escape, if *We* [such obliged Persons,
 How we are, do] Neglect so Great Sal-
 vation.

from

G

For

IV.

98 Neglect in Christians most Punishable.

Serm. IV.

Verse 2.

For, in the preceding Verse, He tells Christians that the Jews, for transgressing the Law of Moses, were to receive a just Recompence of Reward. — And Now, then saith He, shall we Escape, if we neglect so Great [Even the much Greater] Salvation? Fairly intimating, That Christians, as they have Greater Privileges and Better Encouragements than Others. So their Abuse of them will bind them over to Proportionably Greater and Worse Punishments. So that We — [if We Neglect,] must never Hope to go Unpunished: Yea, of all Others, we must expect the severest Punishments.

For, as we are told that there are Degrees in Glory; So we may not doubt but that there are also in Punishments, which God will proportion to Men's respective Privileges and Encouragements: Whereof they, that have enjoyed Lesser and Fewer, shall for their Neglect be beaten with fewer Stripes. Therefore the Poor Gentile (it may be reasonably supposed) will

find a Cooler Place in Hell, than the favoured *Jews*; And the *Jews* than *Christians*. For the *Gentiles*, who want the Advantages of the *Mosaic Law*, will have only the *Law of Nature* to answer for. But the *Jew*, at the Day of Judgment, will find himself Condemned by both the *Law of Nature*, and the *Law of Moses*: Whose Guilt will, Consequently, be Double, and his Punishment, so much the sorer for his Neglect. Thus *St. Paul* tells us, That as many as have sinned without the Law, shall Perish without the Law, and as many as have sinned in the Law, shall be Judged by the Law [according to the Circumstances of Transgressors their Punishment will in Righteousness, be proportion'd out unto them.] And *Christians*, then, who have the *Law of Nature*, the *moral Law of Moses*, and the *Law of the Gospel* to answer for; as These shall have added to their Guilt, so God will add to their Punishment: Who, of all men will, for their Neglect, become in the end,

Rom. ii. 12.

Serm. IV.

Certainly, *most Miserable!* Whose *Punishment* will be as fore, as their *Salvation*, if not neglected, is *Great!* Nothing being more Evident, than that *Christians* will not be *Damn'd* on the same Terms with other *Sinners*, because they *Neglect* under more *Advantages* a *Greater Salvation*.

In vain then do *Wicked Christians* flatter themselves in their *Careless Profession* of the very *Best Religion*. For which they will Certainly be so much the *Worse*; if by their *Strict Regard* they become not *Better* and *Safer* by it. And *Better*--*Far Better* had it been for them, had they never *Heard* of the *Gospel-Salvation* by *Christ*, than wilfully to have *Neglected* it--Even as much as it is more *Miserable* to *Fall thro'* one's *Own Fault*, than by one's *Hard Fate!* For whatever *Unknown* way to *Escape*, God may be supposed to have in *Reserve* for the *Salvation* of an *Honest Heathen*, or a *Conscientious Jew*; there can be none for a *Careless Christian* to *Presume* on, who hath
alrea-

already *Neglected* God's most *Gracious* and *Extraordinary* Proposals to *save* him.

So that *a Salvation---so Great---Neglected---And by Us too---How shall we Escape?* It is *Impossible*, and in *vain* to *Hope* it! nothing but *Inevitable* *Ruin* must necessarily *Overtake* and *Eternally Overwhelm* us, if we continue to *Neglect* it.

How reasonable, then, is it; that our serious *Belief* and *Remembrance* of *This*, Should *Effectually Warn* against such *Neglect*; And *Powerfully Excite* us to *Work out our Own* *Great-Salvation?*

This shall, therefore, be the *Use*, I intend seriously to press upon you, for a *Conclusion* to this *Practical Subject*. And

Let the *Consideration* of what hath been said be our *Warning* not to *Neglect* so *Great-Salvation*; to which most are *Prone*, and wherewith none can be *safe*. For how *Few*, *Alas!* are there; who *Mind* their *Salvation*

Serm. IV.

as they Ought and Might! with a like Faithfulness they do their Other Concerns! Or as they have the Examples of Christ and his First Followers for it! Nay, is there any thing Less set by! Less Talk'd of! Or less Endeavour'd after in this World, than the Great Concern before us, relating to the other World! Do not Most Live, as if they had nothing else to Mind besides How to Live! And were sure that they should Cease to be, as soon as they shall Cease to Live Here! Is there any thing for which Thought is taken more, than for the present Life? what shall we Eat--or what shall we Drink--And what shall we Put on--About which no Pains, no Cost, no Time is Spared--while the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, are sought after either not at all; or only by the by, Very Sparingly, Formally, Grudgingly, and Awkwardly-- with a singular Indifferency, or Reluctancy; that are the Effects of only Infidelity or Disregard. Insomuch, that one cannot see, how

some

some men could Take more Thought Serm. IV.
and Bustle more for the Present, And
care and stir less for the Future State,
than they now do ; were they sure
that there was no other but the Present
State ; Who are, or ought to be sure
of the contrary ; and that they shall
as surely Live Hereafter, as that they
do Live now ; And that in Happiness
or Misery ; Inconceivable and Eternal ;
just as they have Dispos'd and Quali-
fy'd themselves by their Now Living.

Ah ! what a Stupidity and Madnes
then blinds and besots the Minds of
Men ! To see and Regard Every thing
and any thing more than what con-
cerns them above all things to regard !
And to live on in a Continued Neglect
of what will Ruin, and Eternally
undo them if Neglected ! Better had
you never to have had any thing else
to have Cared for, than to have been
Careless of your Salvation in this
present State ! For unto what wretch-
ed Circumstances will such your Neg-
lect reduce you ? wherein you can

Serm. IV.

have no Hope for Safety; And will Live every Moment in Danger! From which nothing, but a Short, Uncertain Abode in the Body, doth Reprieve you! Ah Think---Think what will become of you, if you should Die before you shall have taken more care about your Future State; and Death should seize you (as it is a Wonder of Mercy it hath not done so, e're now) in this Heedless Course of Life (as to your Souls) in which you are yet engaged.

Believe it, *Salvation* is not a thing to be *Trifled with*: Nor will it be always, or long, in your Power to trifle with it: Neither will you Know what to do without it: When it will be for ever out of your Power: And there will then be no *Escaping*, when once it is so!

Let, then, *the Terrors of the Lord* prove Sufficient to *Persuade*, and Convince you that you cannot Possibly be Safe, any longer than while you Care all you can for the Safety of your Souls.

The

The Danger is *apparent* ! Is *Certain* !
Is *Imminent* ! Is *Inevitable* ! Which
every Day draw's *nearer* ; And will
too soon *Overtake* whom it shall not,
in time, *Awaken* to *Escape* it !

Remember, -- There are but *Two*
Fates, attending all Mankind ! And
those are *Salvation*, and *Damnation* !
What these import I leave you to
Consider ! One of them we are now,
every one of us for ourselves, *Living*
for, and daily *Dying* to ! And a Few
-- a very few Days will, according
to the present Care we ourselves take
for it, Decide our Lot therein for
ever ! If no Warning shall serve our
turn, we must e'ne take what will fol-
low. And could I but persuade you
to *Believe*, and to *Consider* what that
is likely to be, there would need no
more to prevail with you, to begin
forthwith, in good earnest, without
any more *Neglect*, or longer *Delay*,
to *Work out your own Salvation* with fear
and trembling ; that, thro' the Grace
and Mercy of God, which are never
wanting

Serm. TV.

wanting to the willing, you may, even yet, *Escape* your threatned *Damnation*. And therefore also,

2. *Let these Considerations Powerfully Excite you to the Practice of this your Duty.* Which is, surely, the most reasonable Request in the World: Desiring you only not to run upon that *Inevitable Ruin*, you are in the way of; And to Love yourselves so well as to *Escape* while you may.

This one would think, cannot fail to prevail; if what I have been telling you may have gain'd Credit with you. Nor is it what only I tell you; But it is the *Word of God*, [What he himself hath told you; And ordered to be Recorded for the Warning and Conviction of Men of all Generations] That none shall *Escape*, who do Neglect so Great *Salvation* — which there is no putting to the Venture, between Hope and Fear; But he must look for nothing but *Damnation without Mercy*, Who finally neglect's his *Salvation against all Warning*. Ah!

Ah! Be then persuaded to be more
circumspect and careful for your own
so Great Good! God is not willing you
should Perish: Neither *Delight's* he in
the Death of any Sinner, that will but
Turn and Live to be saved. His Com-
mandments are not grievous! His Terms,
are very Reasonable! Very Easie! Ve-
ry Sweet and Pleasant! What no man
ever Disliked, that ever thoroughly
Complied with! Which will Recompence
your hardest Tryals! And infinitely sa-
tisfy you for all your Pains! Amounting
to no more than a Repentance unto Life
never to be Repented of! Which you
will never have reason to Regret! And
which, if Neglected, you will ever Be-
wail! You cannot Live Safely! You
cannot Die Peaceably! You cannot
Appear with any Courage before God
without it! By Working out your own
Salvation, you will have Done your
Business for both this World and the
Other! Nothing will Hurt in Life!
Nothing can Fright at Death! Every
thing will Transport with Endless, Un-
interrupted Joys afterwards! Ah!

Serm. IV.

Ezek. xviii
32.

Joh. v. 3.

Serm. IV.

1 Pet. iv. 3.

Ah! *Let the Time Past* then, of your Neglect seem now at last not only *Sufficient*, but too Much to you, wherein to have Hazarded so Great a Concern. 'Tis well for you that God hath *Relieved* you hitherto! Longer than you could Depend on! who nevertheless will be yet *Undone*, if he *Forbear* not further, to allow you Time also to *Correct* and Redeem your *Past Neglects*! If therefore you Ever intend to be more Careful of your Safety; Begin Now at length, tho' with the Latest, and Live not at an Adventure, amidst Doubts and Fears any longer!

For, either you do Intend to be more Sollicitous and Industrious for your *Salvation*; or you hope to be saved notwithstanding your Neglect; or else you expect no such thing, but are resolv'd to see the *worst on't*, and run the *Venture*, tho' you are sure to be *Damn'd* for it. And yet I would hope None, that now Hear me, are so far hardened, as thus to Dare Divine Vengeance, and Renounce their own

Salva-

Salvation. Nor, I am sure, if you have Heard me, can you be so Unreasonable as to *Hope*, while you *Neglect*. And if then, you ever intend to *Repent*; Why not Now? If you are not yet *Convinc'd*; What can be more said to *Convince* you? If you are *Convinc'd*! Ah, Fear--Fear to *Withstand*! Dare not any longer to *Neglect*! *Cheerfully Submit*! *Heartily Comply*! And instantly *strike in* with the Dictates of your own *Reason*; the Admonitions of *Conscience*; and the present Motions of the Blessed *Spirit*, while *Light* and *Inclination* last, and before *Blindness* and *Hardness* seize and shackle you unto Final Perdition!

I intreat---I adjure you---as you will Answer it to God, to your own Souls, to all the Means and Endeavours that have been offered you: (And another Day you shall Answer it to all!) Suffer this *Word of Exhortation* to Prevail with you: To break off your Evil Ways by *Repentance*, and turn unto the Lord your God, who is *Gracious* and

Heb. xiii.
22.

Joel ii. 13.

Merci-

Serm. IV.

Merciful, slow to Anger, and of Great Kindness; and Repenteth him of the Evil [wherewith Guilt is threatned upon your Ceasing to do Evil, and Learning to do well, as he hath Com- manded, and ye are able.] Having, by his Prophet, assured us, That when the Wicked Man turneth away from his Wickedness that he hath committed, and doth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his Soul alive.

Ezek. xviii
27.

Wonder not, if I may now have seemed to you more than usually Importunate and Earnest! The Subject is Weighty! The Errand concerneth you! He, whose it is, is desirous to speed in it! He, whom I serve, expects me to be Faithful! And therefore, forgive me, if I am loth to lose my Labour! If I would fain Awake and Rouze the Negligent, even yet to Escape and be Saved! I assent to what of Old, was said — *Stultus Labor Inep- tiarum*—that it is a ridiculous thing to make a Noise and Pother about a Trifle—But, sure, Life and Death—

Heaven

Heaven and Hell—These are no Trifles! Serm. IV.

Nor do Men well either Understand or Consider the Worth of Souls, and the Greatness of Salvation, that can Disgust the Zeal, or that will Disregard the Seriousness of their Spiritual Advisers and Reprovers.

For, if ever Importunity be Seasonable, and Stimulation necessary, it is when the Occasion is most Important, and Men's Neglect most Evident and Fatal. The Terror and Disturbance of which (be it also Remembred) are not of Man's making to Affright and Fret; But they are of the Lord's Appointment to Excite and Reform Secure Sinners! And, sure I am, on whomsoever they shall have this Blessed Effect, they will soon cease to be Terrible, and will end in a Peace which nothing can Disturb. But to such as, notwithstanding all that hath been, or can be said, Resolve to Persist in their wonted Indifference and incorrigible Neglect of their Salvation, there will be always great Reason for Uneasiness.

And

Serm. III.

And Happy for them, might they never more have one Moment's Ease in their so Dangerous and Fatal Circumstances!

May then, the Flames of Hell flash Lightning in their Faces; and the Threats of God found Thunder in their Ears! May Horror fill their Minds; and Trembling seize their Joints! May *Any thing—Every thing*, Disturb, till it *Awake the Dead in Sin!* Break off their senseless Neglect! Drive them out of Danger, to Escape Perdition! And Prevail with them; even yet, before it be too late, to *wake out, with Fear and Trembling, their own [so Great]*

Salvation but *Secure sinners!* And *whomsoever they shall have this blessed Effect, they will soon cease to be Terrible, and will end in a Peace which nothing can Disturb.* But to such as notwithstanding all that hath been or can be said, Resolve to persist in their *worsted Distress* **FINIS** *Neglect of their Salvation, there will be always great Reason for Concern.* And